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5th March, 2005

Mr Alistair Sands
Secretary – Finance and Public Administration Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Mr Sands,

Could you please present this letter to the **Senate Enquiry into Regional Partnerships Program**.

2.30am. I am lying awake thinking about the enquiry - so I get up and do something about it. As I write, I am reminded of Mother Theresa's words:

"I am only a drop in the ocean, but I am **one drop**."

We are a "Micro" size family export business (Tourism) in the scheme of things. Last year (2004) we put a very modest application for \$50,000 (Dollar for Dollar) to grow our Export Business (Tourism). One of our sons with a M.B.A. vetted it financially and we felt pretty confident.

Many months later a lady from Sydney rang us and said they had 176 applications and we missed out. Why? We didn't have enough letters of Community Support. We were only asked for one support letter from our local Tourist Organization, which we sent. We could have supplied 40-50 easily from Farmers on our pay-roll.

Please look at our Website to see the type of work we do, pioneering Agricultural Tourism here in the Tweed Valley - we are located in far northern NSW on the edge of the Gold Coast. Please see the maps on our Website www.beachfarm.com.au and Brochure - our mixed tropical fruit orchard is only 4 minutes drive from Kingscliff Beach.

At present we can only take about 15 Tourists in our Farmhouse, always from Singapore (Chinese, Malaysian and Indian) also Hong Kong and Japan. Undercapitalized we applied for the Partnership Grant. No luck. Desperate to expand, we pioneered a program for High School and University Agricultural Students to be accommodated on Farms all over the Tweed Valley. Most farms can only take 2 persons, so we put 2 Boys or 2 Girls on a variety of farms around the Valley.

Inbound Tour Agents got to hear about our program from the Newspapers. A large Japanese company want us to take as many students as we possibly can. This is our 3rd. year of the Agricultural Students Farm Host Program.

"Non-Agricultural" Students got to hear by word of mouth about our program. We were asked "Do we have to be Agricultural Students, as we just want to have a Country Experience?".

Our first batch of 70 Non-Agricultural Students are due to arrive on May 20th-23rd from Japan. The program will give them an adventure away from Sydney and the Gold Coast and help to strengthen their English by staying with Australian farming families.

We package our Student Farm Host Programs with Gold Coast attractions. They often have a night on the Gold Coast before flying home.

We lived on the smell of an oil rag to build this Family Business. Some recognition and encouragement would be very welcome. We hear in the media that "Imports are up and Exports are down". I believe we need a Micro Division in "Regional Partnerships Program" for solid family Export Businesses to expand. The "Macro" size businesses seem to get Millions at Election time and the Micros are ignored.

It is heartbreaking to hear about the scandal surrounding the Program. No one came to check us out and see what we really do for Farming here. Day Tours as well, to various Specialty Farm enterprises for Chinese and Japanese delegates. We wonder if we are wasting our time trying for another "Partnership" Program next time.

But hope springs eternal, so better days ahead.

Kind regards in your Senate Deliberations. We would be interested to know the outcome of the Enquiry – please advise how we can get this information.

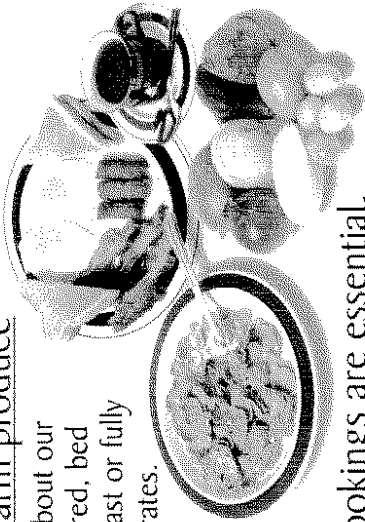
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Helen Taylor".

Helen Taylor.

P.S. It's good to hear Kim's voice booming on the media. We have 2 parties again.

Fresh farm produce

Ask us about our self-catered, bed & breakfast or fully catered rates.



Pre-bookings are essential.

We provide affordable family holidays in a relaxed and unique environment. Your entire family will absolutely love their Beachfarm experience!

Farm activities include:

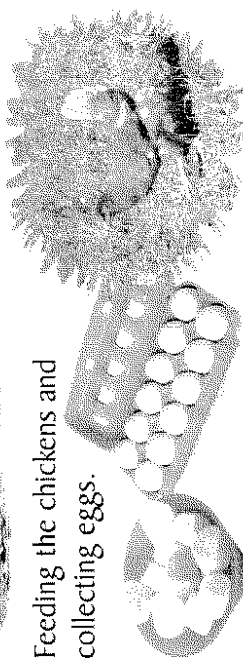
Guided "Pick and Taste" tours of fruits in season.



Feeding the ducks on the dam.



Feeding the chickens and collecting eggs.



Toasting marshmallows and cooking "bush" toast around the campfire

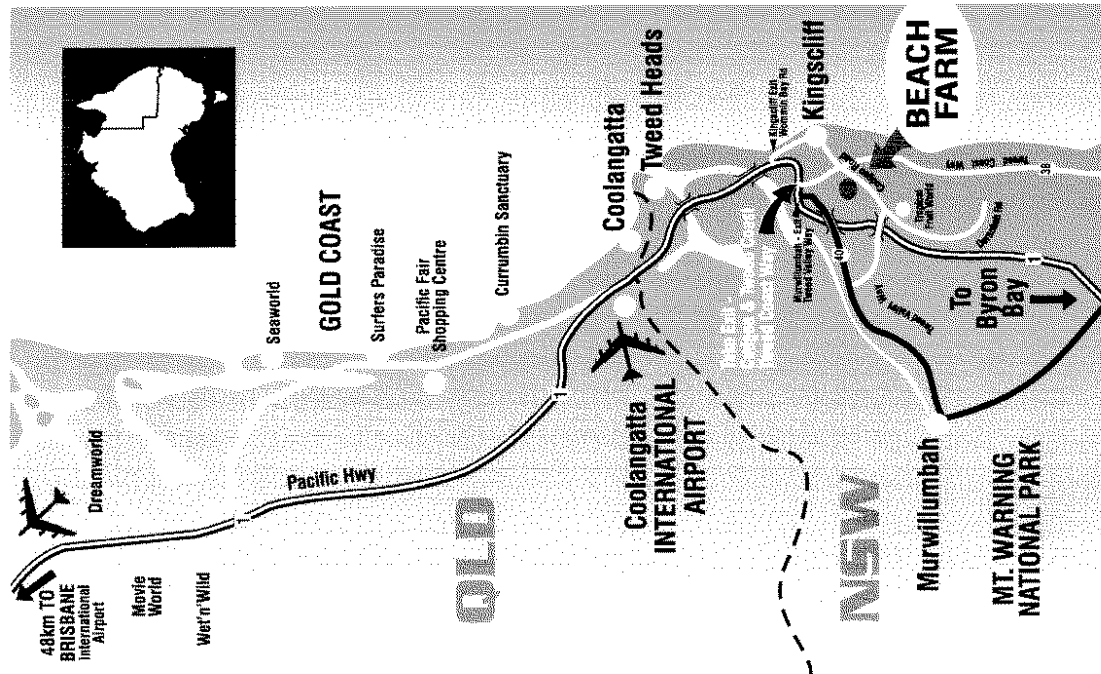


Hand lead horse rides (optional extra)

Other:

Covered BBQ area available.

Lots of farm fresh fruit available in season including Avocados, Mangoes, Mandarines, Custard Apples, Bananas etc.



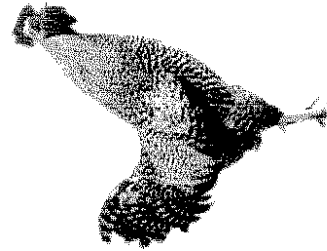
"Your family and friends will just love this real farmstay adventure at Beachfarm!"

Beachfarm Farmstay

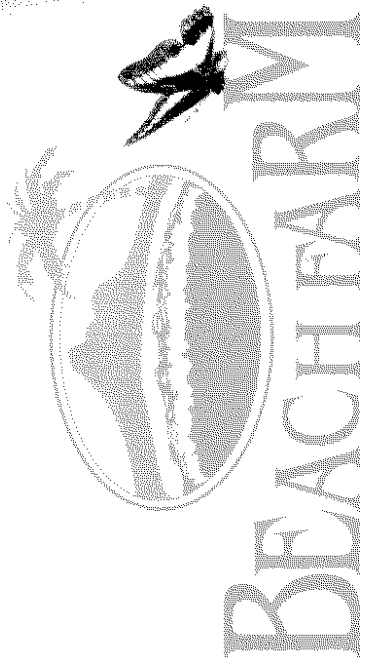
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FARMSTAY ACCOMMODATION & TOURS

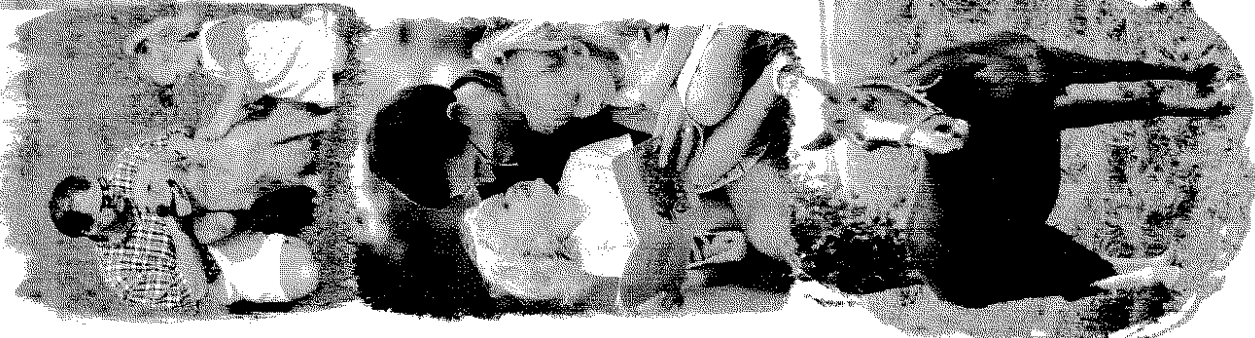


TWEED VALLEY - NEXT TO THE GOLD COAST

A U S T R A L I A

Beachfarm

Treat your family to the best of both worlds, a true country living experience only 5mins from Kingscliff beach.



Beachfarm

Kingscliff Beach

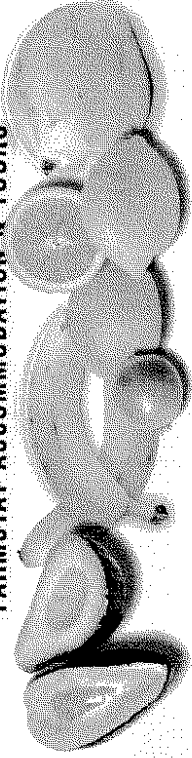
Beachfarm is a working, subtropical fruit orchard growing Custard Apples, Mangos, Avocados, Bananas, and other tropical fruits. Beachfarm is owned and operated by the Taylor family.

We provide country hospitality in a friendly country living atmosphere. Accommodation includes family rooms, Double, twin share and bunk rooms.



BEACHFARM

FARMSTAY ACCOMMODATION & TOURS



TWEED VALLEY - NEXT TO THE GOLD COAST

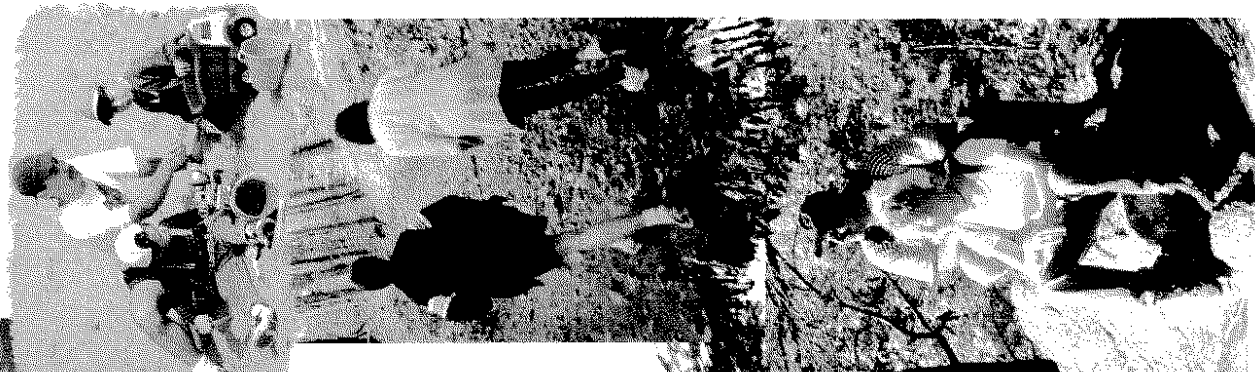
Beachfarm is conveniently located. Only 15min drive from the Gold Coast Airport at Coolangatta, and 45min from Surfers Paradise or Byron Bay.

We are very close to the Tweed Coast with just a 5min drive to the beautiful Beaches and trendy alfresco eateries at Kingscliff. Murwillumbah, gateway to Mt. Warning National Park is just a 20min scenic drive inland.



Farmstay

Beachfarm has a variety of accommodation styles, and catering for small groups and families is a speciality.



Beachfarm is the perfect destination to holiday from!